

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 34-48 are pending. Claims 43 and 48 have been amended so as to be in independent form, without narrowing each claim. Claims 1, 34, 43 and 48 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 43-48 were rejected under Section 101 as not being directed to patentable subject matter. As suggested in the Office Action, claims 43 and 48 have been amended to place them in independent form as method claims. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. The Office Action appeared to object to the term "trading agents" on the grounds that recitation of this term, such as in claim 1, amounts to reciting a human as part of the apparatus. Applicants point out that the term trading agent is defined in the specification, e.g., at page 10, and is clearly recited as being a part of the trading system, and not a human.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the cordial and productive telephone interview conducted with Applicants' undersigned representative on April 25, 2008. During the interview, the above amendments to claims 43-48, and the issue relating to the trading agent, were discussed. Also discussed was the absence in the January 28, 2008 Office Action of any reference to the amendments to the claims and arguments presented in the September 25, 2007 Amendment, which was entered upon the filing of the RCE on October 30, 2007. During the interview, Examiner Felten stated that he would now review and consider the amendments and arguments presented in the September 25, 2007 paper and issue a new, and non-final, Office Action in due course if the case is not allowed. The arguments presented in the September 25, 2007 paper are incorporated by reference herein.

For at least the reasons set forth above, the claims of the present application are believed in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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